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Security Council

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Letter dated 25 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Please find attached the assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Greece in July 2005 (see annex). This report was prepared under my supervision, after consultation with the other members of the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter and its annex to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Adamantios Th. **Vassilakis**
Ambassador
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Annex to the letter dated 25 October 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of Greece (July 2005)

Introduction

Under the presidency of Greece in July 2005, the Security Council undertook a very heavy programme of work, addressing a wide range of issues on its agenda, including Côte d'Ivoire, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Middle East, Iraq and threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

During the month of July, the Security Council held 14 official meetings and conducted informal consultations on 13 occasions. It adopted 7 resolutions and 10 presidential statements. The President also made four statements to the press on behalf of the Council. Furthermore, the President participated in and delivered a statement on behalf of the Council to the sixth high-level meeting of the Secretary-General with Heads of regional and other intergovernmental organizations, held in New York on 25 and 26 July 2005.

On 5 July, after its adoption, the President briefed the press on the programme of work of the Security Council. The President also held meetings with the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council, briefing them on the work of the Security Council.

Through its website (www.greeceun.org), the presidency provided regular updates on the programme of work as well as on the activities of the Council.

Africa

Central African Republic

On 5 July, at informal consultations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Lamine Cissé, presented the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic and the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in the Central African Republic, and briefed the Council on the situation following the results of the presidential and legislative elections held in the country on 8 May 2005.

On 22 July, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/35), expressing its gratification at the successful holding of the presidential and legislative elections in the country and inviting the Government, as well as all political and social forces of the Central African Republic, to consolidate the national dialogue and ensure national reconciliation.

Côte d'Ivoire

On 6 July, following informal consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/28), in response to the signing, on 29 June in Pretoria, of

the declaration on the implementation of the Pretoria Agreement, and demanded that all Ivorian parties implement fully all the commitments made with the African Union mediation and comply scrupulously with the timetable agreed on 29 June in Pretoria.

On 26 July, during informal consultations, the Council members heard a briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hédi Annabi, on the deterioration of the security situation, including fighting in areas north of Abidjan on 23 July. The Assistant Secretary-General expressed the view that the Council should exert pressure on all sides so that they would refrain from any hostile action, and from making statements which incite to violence.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

On 13 July, in informal consultations, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, William Lacy Swing, briefed the Council on the latest developments on the ground, and stressed the need to get foreign armed groups out of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The members also discussed issues concerning the budget for election preparations, based on the Secretary-General's updated report. Following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/31), in which it condemned, with the utmost firmness, the massacre of some 50 people on 9 July in Ntulu-Mamba, Democratic Republic of the Congo.

On 28 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1616 (2005), by which it renewed, until 31 July 2006, the arms embargo as defined and amended by resolutions 1493 (2003) and 1596 (2005), and requested the Secretary-General to re-establish, for a period expiring on 31 January 2006, the Group of Experts referred to in resolution 1533 (2004).

Great Lakes region

On 13 July, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, Ibrahima Fall, briefed the Council members, in informal consultations, on the progress of the preparations for the second Great Lakes Conference, to be held in November 2005.

Eritrea and Ethiopia

On 11 July, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, presented, in informal consultations, the Secretary-General's latest progress report on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2005/400). It was the assessment of the Under-Secretary-General that the protracted stalemate in the overall political process between Eritrea and Ethiopia posed a threat to military stability, and he therefore asked the Council to consider possible options to achieve a breakthrough. Following consultations, the President, in a statement to the press, noted the Council's deep concern at the lack of progress in the implementation of the decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, and encouraged both parties to work towards full normalization of their relations.

Somalia

On 14 July, in informal consultations, the Council members were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, François Lonseny Fall, on the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2005/392) and on recent developments in the political process. The Special Representative suggested that a way to resolve the existing stalemate in the peace process could be through the organization of a peace conference in a regional State. At the same meeting, the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992), Ambassador Baja of the Philippines, made a statement to the Security Council on the mid-term report of the Somalia Monitoring Group. Following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/32), in which it called upon all Somali leaders to continue to work towards reconciliation, through inclusive dialogue and consensus-building. The Council members also took note of the African Union's request for the authorization of an exemption on the arms embargo, for the possible deployment of a peace support mission in Somalia.

Sudan

On 14 July, in a statement to the press read by the President, the members of the Council welcomed the inauguration on 9 July of the Presidency of the new Government of National Unity in the Sudan, as well as the signing of a Declaration of Principles on 5 July 2005 concerning the conflict in Darfur.

On 22 July, at an open meeting, the Council members were briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jan Pronk, on the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2005/467) on the situation in Darfur, as well as on the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Special Representative made a comprehensive assessment of the situation and said that he was cautiously optimistic. In particular, with regard to the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, he stressed that a new chapter in the history of the Sudan had opened with the inauguration of the new Government of National Unity. Nevertheless, despite this improved picture, he stated that the situation was still very fragile. The problems caused by the 24-year-old civil war could not be overcome overnight. With regard to Darfur, he was more reserved, stating that, despite the fact that militia attacks on villages had decreased and the humanitarian situation in the camps had improved, the situation was still delicate. The militia had not been disarmed and the efforts of the Government to tackle impunity were not advancing in a satisfactory manner. Nevertheless, he said that the signing of a Darfur peace agreement by the end of the year was possible, provided that there was increased pressure on all parties to find a solution.

In the consultations that followed, the Chairman of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005), Ambassador Vassilakis of Greece, made a statement to the Security Council on the work of the Committee, in which he outlined the progress achieved by the Committee since the start of its work. The Council members stressed the importance they attributed to the successful conclusion of the next round of the Abuja talks for the resolution of the conflict in Darfur.

Other matters

On 27 July, at a private meeting, under the item entitled "Letters dated 26 July 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/485 and S/2005/489)", the Security Council heard a briefing by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on human settlements issues in Zimbabwe, Anna Tibaijuka. Several members of the Council expressed their concern at the humanitarian crisis and called for humanitarian assistance and for the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Envoy.

Americas

Haiti

On 28 July, in informal consultations, the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations on his recent visit to Haiti. He updated the Council on the security situation, which he characterized as extremely fragile, and underlined the political instability and the slow progress in the preparations for the electoral process. He also emphasized the positive contribution of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti in the efforts to stabilize the country.

Asia

Bougainville, Papua New Guinea

On 6 July, at a public meeting, the Security Council heard a final briefing by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Danilo Türk, on the completion of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Bougainville (UNOMB) on 30 June 2005, as well as on the overall developments in Bougainville since 7 April 2005, which culminated in the inauguration of the Autonomous Government, on 15 June, thus marking the full implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement and leading to the successful completion of the UNOMB mandate.

Middle East

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 21 July, the Security Council held an open debate on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question, in response to a request by Kuwait, on behalf of the Arab Group (S/2005/469), for an immediate meeting of the Council to consider recent developments in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Alvaro de Soto, briefed the Council on the latest developments in the region.

In his briefing, the Special Coordinator said that Israel's disengagement from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank was a moment pregnant with hope but also fraught with peril. He added that the planned Israeli withdrawal, albeit partial and on terms largely set by the occupier, represented a positive, precedent-setting

step that the international community could not but support. Israel's forthcoming disengagement also offered an opportunity to re-energize the road map, which was still considered the best way to achieve a permanent peace and an end to the occupation that had begun in 1967.

In the ensuing debate, the Council members stressed the need to refrain from returning to a cycle of violence, and emphasized that the only way to achieve a permanent peace was a viable two-State solution achieved through the full implementation of the road map. Speakers also underlined the importance of ensuring that the Israeli withdrawal was complete and that it not prejudge final status negotiations.

Also participating in the debate were the representatives of the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine, Israel, Kuwait, Egypt, Yemen, South Africa, Tunisia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Malaysia, India, Lebanon, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Norway, the Sudan, Cuba, Pakistan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Morocco.

Representatives of the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference also made statements, as did the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People.

Lebanon

On 26 July, in informal consultations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations presented the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The members of the Council examined the situation in the area of operations of UNIFIL and expressed their concern over violations across the Blue Line that had resulted in deaths and injuries on both sides, and urged the parties to put an end to those violations and to refrain from any act or provocation that could further escalate tensions.

On 25 July, the members of the Council held a meeting with troop-contributing countries for UNIFIL.

On 29 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1614 (2005), by which it extended the mandate of UNIFIL for six more months, until 31 January 2006.

Europe

Georgia

On 27 July, at a private meeting, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Georgia, Heidi Tagliavini, presented the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG). She characterized the situation as intricate and complex, expressed reserved optimism, owing to recent positive political messages sent by both sides to the conflict, and underlined the need for continued and coordinated efforts by the international community in support of the peace process. The Special Envoy of the President of Georgia, Irakli Alasania, presented his Government's position.

In the consultations which followed, the members of the Council recognized the latest signs of progress after the meeting of the Group of Friends at Geneva in

April 2005, with the participation of the two sides. They also underlined the need to intensify the already resumed dialogue and the efforts for a peaceful resolution of the problem.

On 25 July, the members of the Council held a meeting with troop-contributing countries to UNOMIG.

On 29 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1615 (2005), by which it extended the mandate of UNOMIG for six more months, until 31 January 2006.

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 7 July, following consultations, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1611 (2005), condemning the terrorist attacks in London that day.

On 8 July, following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/29), condemning the assassination of Ihab al-Sherif, Egypt's ambassador designate to Iraq, and all terrorist attacks in that country, including the attempted assassinations of diplomats from Bahrain and Pakistan as well as attacks against other civilian personnel. The Council also reaffirmed its unwavering support for the Iraqi people in their political transition, as well as for Iraq's independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity, and it called upon the international community to stand by the Iraqis in their pursuit of peace, stability and democracy.

On 12 July, in a statement to the press, the President voiced the Council's unequivocal condemnation of the terrorist bombing that day in Lebanon that killed one person and wounded several others, including the country's Defence Minister. The members of the Council also strongly condemned the continuation of political assassinations and other terrorist acts. They warned that those responsible for such acts would not be permitted to undermine the stability, national unity, full sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon. In the same statement, the Council members also condemned the terrorist attack in the city of Netanya in Israel that happened the same day.

On 20 July, at an open meeting, the Council was briefed by the Chairmen of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism, and the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the recent work carried out by their respective Committees, the progress made and the remaining challenges. At the end of the meeting, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/34), by which, inter alia, it reaffirmed its call for enhanced cooperation among the three Committees.

On 27 July, following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/36), unequivocally condemning the terrorist attacks in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 23 July. The Council also reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security and that any acts of terrorism were criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation, whenever and by whomever committed.

On 27 July, following consultations, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/37), condemning in the strongest possible terms the assassination of Ali Belaroussi and Azzeddine Belkadi, two diplomats accredited to the Algerian Embassy to Iraq.

On 29 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1617 (2005), by which it strengthened the sanctions regime with respect to Al-Qaida, Osama bin Laden and the Taliban, and other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them, and extended the mandate of the Monitoring Team for a period of 17 months.

Peacekeeping

On 18 July, at an open meeting, on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1308 (2000), the Council was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Peter Piot, on addressing HIV/AIDS among peacekeepers. Subsequently, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/33) recognizing that men and women in the uniformed services are vital elements in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and welcoming efforts by Member States, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS to counter the spread of the disease. The Council also welcomed the collaboration between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNAIDS to address HIV/AIDS awareness among peacekeeping personnel, both uniformed and civilian, and commended UNAIDS for developing, in cooperation with interested States, national programmes to address HIV/AIDS among their uniformed personnel. Furthermore, it encouraged Member States, in preparing their personnel for participation in peacekeeping operations, to employ best practices in HIV/AIDS education, prevention, awareness, countering stigma and discrimination, voluntary confidential counselling and testing, and care and treatment.

International tribunals

On 26 July, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 1613 (2005), by which it forwarded to the General Assembly the nominations for ad litem judges of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

Thematic issues

Maintenance of international peace and security

On 12 July, the Council held an open debate on the maintenance of international peace and security: the role of the Security Council in humanitarian crises — challenges, lessons learned and the way ahead. The debate was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Petros Molyviatis. The Secretary-General made a statement, followed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

Prior to the debate, the presidency had circulated a discussion/concept paper on the topic, setting out specific sectors on which the Security Council could focus

its efforts in order to break the conflict-cycle in conflict-affected societies and prevent them from relapsing into crises, and assessing the effectiveness of such measures and the need to reinforce them in the future.

Following the debate, the Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2005/30), in which it reiterated, inter alia, the importance it attached to the urgent restoration of justice and the rule of law in post-conflict societies and in promoting national reconciliation, democratic development and human rights, as well as the increasing importance of civilian aspects of conflict management in addressing complex crisis situations and in preventing the recurrence of conflict. Furthermore, the Council stressed the need to ensure adequate and timely financing for peacebuilding priorities at all stages of the peace process, and took note with interest of the important proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a peacebuilding commission.

Children and armed conflict

Following six months of consultations on a draft resolution prepared by Benin, on 26 July the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1612 (2005) on children and armed conflict, by which, inter alia, it requested the Secretary-General to implement the monitoring and reporting mechanism set out in the resolution, beginning with its application to parties in situations of armed conflict listed in the annexes to the Secretary-General's report (S/2005/72) that were on the agenda of the Security Council, and then, in close consultation with countries concerned, to apply it to parties in other situations of armed conflict listed in the annexes to that report, bearing in mind the discussion of the Security Council and the views expressed by Member States, and taking into account the findings and recommendations of an independent review on the implementation of the mechanism to be reported to the Security Council by 31 July 2006. The Council decided also to establish a working group of the Security Council to review the reports of the mechanism and make relevant recommendations to the Council.

Other matters

On 28 July, in informal consultations and under the agenda item "Other matters", the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, briefed the Council on the human rights dimension of issues on the Council's agenda. She referred to her recent visit to West Africa and stressed that her interlocutors in the countries which she had visited and which were on the Security Council agenda were deeply concerned about impunity, which creates fear and insecurity and undermines the prospects for long-term peace and stability.